# DAKOTA TESL NEWSLETTER

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## President's Message by Dr. Anne Walker


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**Inside this issue:**



"Senator Conrad, What were you thinking?" : Bad News for Title III Funding, Bad News for North and South Dakota

"Hurray" to Senators Johnson and Daschle from South Dakota and Senator Dorgan from North Dakota for voting yes to increase Title III federal funding for the 2004 fiscal year. To North Dakota's Senator Conrad, we ask "What were you thinking?" Senator Conrad was the only U.S. democratic Senator to vote no on the proposed increase of Title III funds. Instead of the senate vote being a bipartisan 47-47 tie, Senator Conrad's "no" vote caused the proposed funding increase to be defeated 46-48. As a result, federal Title III funding for fiscal year 2004 will be cut by $16 million.

For those not yet familiar with Title III and the No Child Left Behind Act, the ramifications for ELL education are staggering. On a nation-wide scale, North and South Dakota have relatively low numbers of Limited English Proficient students. According to how federal Title III moneys are divided up, each of the two states currently receives a minimal $500,000 to fund all of its K-12 programs for LEP students.

$500,000 does not go very far when one considers the burdensome requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act. North and South Dakota are each allowed to reserve $175,000 for state-level Title III expenses (which have been exponentially increased with the new demands of NCLB), leaving only $325,000 to be given directly to the state's public schools. If the $325,000 were distributed equally among all LEP students in North Dakota, schools would receive less than $50.00 per LEP student. That about buys a textbook and one hour of instruction by a certified ELL teacher *per year*. It is a pittance compared to what our states need if they are to achieve NCLB and Title III requirements: 100% of LEP students academically proficient by 2013.

However, schools do not receive a set amount of federal dollars per LEP student. Under Title III formulas, only schools or school districts with a minimum of 100 LEP students are eligible for federal monies. North Dakota has modified that rule to 50 students. That still leaves schools with low LEP enrollments in a serious quandary. If a school enrolls even one LEP student, they are required by federal law to provide that student with ELL instruction by a certified ELL teacher. They must meet federal law while being ineligible for federal money. Schools in North and South Dakota, especially rural schools which are financially fighting to stay alive, simply do not have the money for this.

It is still to be seen how the $16 million in Title III cuts for FY 2004 will affect North and South Dakota. Our states are already struggling to perform NCLB miracles with woefully inadequate funding. Next time you see Senators Daschle, Dorgan, and Johnson, please say "Thank You" for trying to support our K-12 English language learners and all of our efforts in providing them with the best education possible. The next time you see Senator Conrad, you might want to ask him, "What were you thinking?"

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# A Sample Lesson Plan for Adult ESL Students

Submitted by Yvonne Lerew, Dakota TESL Past-President

The following lesson plan was developed by Lara Frey at Lutheran Social Services, Refugee and Immigration Programs in Sioux Falls SD. It is a lesson that Lara has used in the Intermediate ESL class she teaches and it is also among a sampling of lessons that will be included as an addendum to the *SD ESL Teachers' Start-Up Manual.*

The lesson has a few important features. First, the topic of phrasal verbs (or idiomatic verb phrases) is a useful topic for adult students to improve general conversational skills. Phrasal verbs include such sayings as: "turn on", "run into", "get over", etc. While some idioms are rarely used or are used only in some settings, phrasal verbs are widely used and are often the cause of confusion for ESL learners.

Secondly, the lesson has been adapted to use with a multi-level class. In many settings, especially in the Dakotas, the total number of students available at any given time is not large enough to break the group into exclusive levels. Most adult ESL teachers will find that they are teaching multi-level classes. This lesson demonstrates a model of working with more than one level in a classroom setting.

Finally, flashcards were fashioned using shapes from Microsoft Publisher - an improvement over the basic 3x5 card flashcards. These flashcards are clearly devised so that students can see which side is the phrasal verb and which side is the definition thus aiding them in making appropriate matches. To make similar flashcards in Publisher, use the auto-shapes button and click on the block arrows section to make the arrow pointing shape. For the other shape, use the auto-shape square and then modify it. In order to get text in the modified text box, add a text box. Finally, it is helpful to laminate the flashcards so that they last longer.

Here follows the sample lesson plan and sample flashcards:

**Theme:** Vocabulary & Idioms

**Lesson/Objective:** Define and use two-word verbs such as "turn on"

**Whole Group Activity:**

- Introduce Phrasal Verbs /Idioms – what is a verb, what is a preposition, phrasal verb includes a verb & preposition, some have literal meanings and some are less literal
- Discuss how phrasal verbs are used – pronoun between verb & preposition and verbs still take tenses
- Write some phrasal verbs on the board and have students guess their meaning, practice writing the phrasal verbs using pronouns (Turn it on) or in different tenses (She turned it on)

**Learning Activities:**

**Low Intermediate Level**
**Students need to define & use 5 two-word verbs**
**Define:**

- Give each student a phrasal verb card or a phrasal verb meaning card – select phrasal verbs appropriate for the level
- Have students mingle with each other trying to match the phrasal verb with the meaning
- After finding the correct match have the students as a pair write a sentence using the phrasal verb

**Use:**

- Once students have made their initial match and sentence have them repeat the process by handing out new cards for them to match
- Students should write 5 sentences using 5 different phrasal verbs

**High Intermediate Level**
**Students need to define & use 10 two-word verbs**
**Define:**

- Give each student a phrasal verb cards and a phrasal verb meaning cards – select phrasal verbs appropriate for the level
- Have students mingle with each other trying to match the phrasal verb with the meaning
- After finding the correct match have the students as a pair write a sentence using the phrasal verb

**Use:**

- Once students have made their initial match and sentence have them repeat the process by handing out new cards for them to match
- Students should write 10 sentences using 10 different phrasal verbs

## ...A Sample Lesson Plan for Adult ESL Students continued

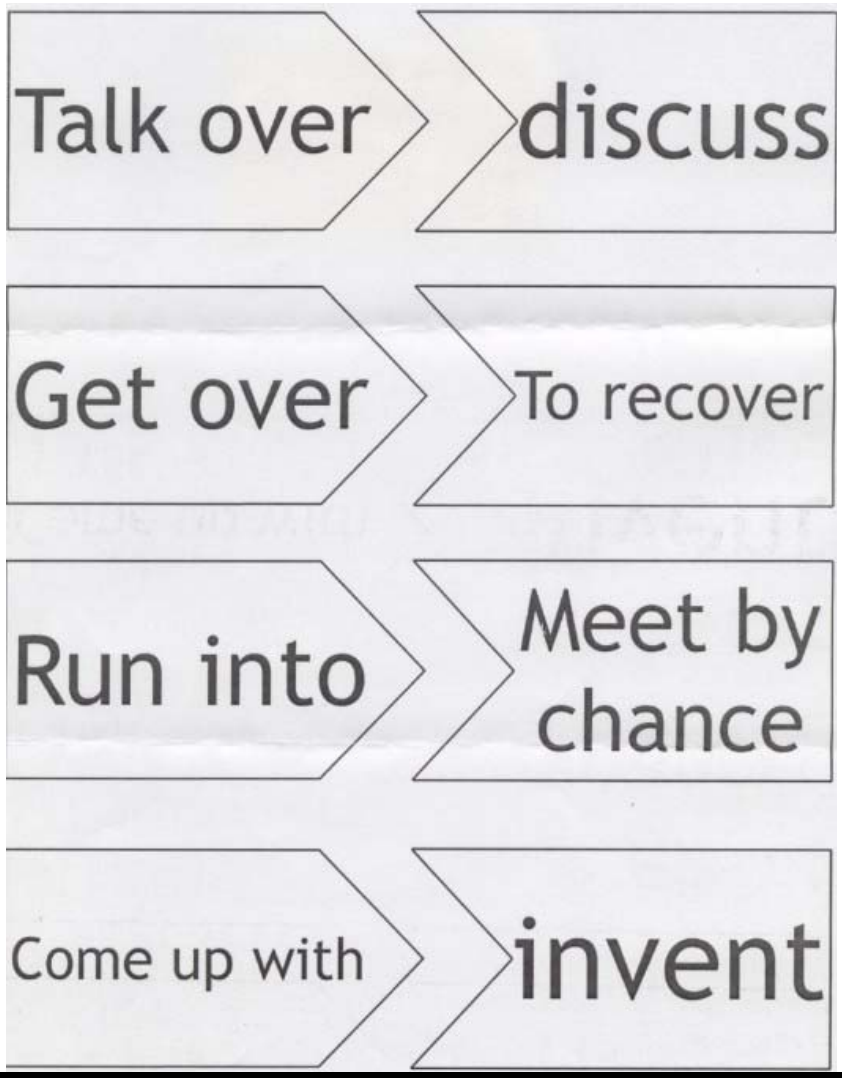
**Whole Group Activity:**
Using the phrasal verb cards as flash cards show a card and have the students say the meaning and then use the phrasal verb in a sentence.

**Assessment:**
Students will demonstrate understanding by matching the phrasal verb with its meaning and then using it in a sentence correctly.

**Resources:**

- "Grammar grab-bag: Tuning in to phrasal verbs" by Cheryl Ernst. *Hands-on English,* Vol. 10, No. 2 July/August 2000.

***Notes:*** *This lesson is for a multilevel classroom of low intermediate & high intermediate students. The main teaching and structure of the class is the same for both groups but the high intermediate students will need to do more defining and sentence writing than the low intermediate students. It works best to partner the low intermediate students with each other and the high intermediate students with each other.*




Flashcards for Sample ESL Lesson plan

**News from State Title III Directors**

## North Dakota

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction Bilingual and Language Acquisition Program provides funding, technical assistance and materials for school districts serving students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds in North Dakota. For more information on funding and services available, contact:
Mari B. Rasmussen
701-328-2958
mrasmussen@state.nd.us
http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/bilingul/index.shtm

## South Dakota

English as a New Language Endorsement Program

South Dakota State University continues to offer coursework for the K-12 English as a New Language endorsement program. The courses are taught on campus in Brookings and in Sioux Falls at the USDSU building. In the spring semester SDSU will offer three courses. The courses can be taken at an undergraduate or graduate level. EDFN 461/561 Cultural and Psychological Perspectives in the Acquisition of ESL will be taught as an Internet based course from the Brookings campus. USDSU will host EDFN 462/562 Teaching Language Arts for English as a Second Language Across the Curriculum and EDFN 770 Enhancing English Language Learning in the Classroom. EDFN 461/561 and EDFN 462/562 are three credit courses that are applied to the required coursework for the endorsement program. EDFN 770 is a three credit elective course. The endorsement program is eighteen hours of coursework with twelve hours of required coursework and six hours of elective coursework. SDSU will also offer a required course and an elective course during the summer session in Sioux Falls. A complete list of coursework can be accessed at http://www.state.sd.us/deca/OPA/Changes/k12new.htm The Sioux Falls School District received a grant that allows mainstreamed teachers to participate in the endorsement program. The Department Of Education also offers opportunities for reimbursement for coursework. Please contact Sara Waring at warings@sf.k12.sd.us if you have questions regarding the endorsement.

Annual Assessment of English Language Proficiency in South Dakota's LEAs

One of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) regulations requires school districts to annually measure the English Language Proficiency of all identified Limited English Proficient (LEP) students. In order to comply with this federal regulation the South Dakota Department of Education has begun the process of planning for the second annual administration of the Stanford English Language Proficiency test (Stanford ELP). As you know, the Stanford ELP is the assessment South Dakota will use to annually document English language proficiency. Recently, the federal Office of English Language Acquisition indicated that English language proficiency data for identified LEP students is due to be reported by April 29, 2004. As a result, the State of South Dakota will need to move administration of the Stanford ELP to the first half of February 2004. This will give the testing company, Harcourt Educational Measurement, time to score the test and report those scores to participating school districts. We are in the process of securing the final testing dates for the Stanford ELP. Please let staff in LEA attendance centers reporting LEP students that this change of testing dates is anticipated. Further details will be sent out to all school districts as soon as testing dates are finalized. If you have any questions regarding this information please contact Title III State Coordinator Jerry Meendering at 605-773-4437 or email jerry.meendering@state.sd.us

# English Language Learners with a Hutterish/German Background:

## A Primer for Colony School Teachers

By Nathaniel Hofer

Teachers at Hutterite colony schools work in a unique multi-language environment. Hutterite children grow up speaking the Hutterish dialect of German, which is a spoken language only. They only start learning the English language when they start school. At the same time, they attend German school, where they learn the German language. We now have students who speak Hutterish, but don't read or write it; read and write in German, but hardly speak it; and read, write, and speak in English.

Why three languages? To understand, we must take a peek at the past. The history of Hutterian language starts in Western Europe in the 1500s, during the Reformation. Many of the people who joined the Anabaptist movement from which the Hutterites stem were German-speaking people from Germany and the surrounding areas. Different parts of Germany had different dialects, due, in part, to the influence of surrounding languages. It is interesting to note that a dialect of German nearly identical to Hutterish is still spoken in some parts of Germany, Austria, and northern Italy. Like Hutterish, it is a spoken language only.

Due to persecution, the Hutterites moved to various countries, including Hungary, Moravia, Romania, Czechoslovakia, and finally, Russia. Through their interaction with the different languages, words from those languages were added to the spoken language, which we now call Hutterish. The written language, German, remained static.

In the late 1700s, the Hutterites moved to the United States. Through their interaction with an English-speaking world, English words are constantly added to the spoken language, but not to the written language. Some examples are: computer, CD ROM, transmission, copier, projector, laptop, pickup, truck, hog market, soybeans, surgery, transplant, etc. Some words are changed slightly to a more Germanic pronunciation, but are still more or less English.

At this time, Hutterish is first language of the Hutterites. It is the language they use for everyday communication – the mother tongue. German could be called their "language of religion". Their church services, hymns, religious writings, history, etc. are in German. English is the "language of business". All business transactions with the surrounding world are carried out in English. Newspapers, technical manuals, markets, etc. are all in English.

This multi-language environment creates unique challenges for teachers at Hutterite colony schools. In this article, we'll explore some of the similarities and differences between the languages and problems that may arise due to those similarities and differences. I will also offer some tips on how to deal with those language related difficulties.

English is a Germanic language, thus the English and German alphabets are quite similar (see Table 1). The letters *f*, *l*, *m*, *n*, *o* and *s* have the same names in German as in English. The letters *b*, *d*, *f*, *g*, *h*, *k*, *l*, *m*, *p*, *q*, *r*, *s*, *t*, *x* and *sh* (*sch* in German) have the same sounds. The *r* is an interesting case. Normally, the *r* is pronounced differently in German than in English. Over time, the German pronunciation has been Anglicized. Many Hutterites now use the English *r* sound in German. These similarities are not a problem. Indeed, since they carry over from one language to another, they aid the language acquisition process.

A real problem is the sounds that differ from German to English. Some English sounds don't exist in German – at least not in the 16th century German used by the Hutterites. They are: short *a*, short *i*, short *o*, *w*, *th*, and *wh*. Consequently, those sounds will cause problems for Hutterite students. Table 2 shows sound differences for problem letters.

Of those differences, the biggest problems are the short *a*, short *i*, short *o*, and the *th*. Similar sounds are often substituted for the sounds that don't exist in German. The word "bat" is pronounced /bet/. The word "not" becomes /nut/. Imagine the spelling nightmares when "bat" and "bet" are pronounced exactly alike; when "thank" sounds just like "tank"; and "Tommy" sounds like "tummy". In my experience, these mispronunciations have been a major obstacle to English language fluency for my students. To remove this obstacle, I work hard to teach proper pronunciation for all letter sounds and pay special attention to the above mentioned problem spots. I also work on proper pronunciation in conversation, when reading aloud, and when studying spelling words. Our spelling words double as vocabulary words and one of the requirements is proper pro-

nunciation. In all areas, I pay special attention to the short vowel sounds, the *th* sound, and stress on the proper syllables.

Another common error is font substitution. Many German schools use a cursive font that is quite a bit different from what we use in English. Similar letters are often carried over to English. This error is especially noticeable when German school first starts in fall. Table 3 shows some common substitutions. I don't consider this substitution a problem since the students are merely using a different font. It usually goes away if I ignore it.

In German, all nouns are capitalized – not just proper nouns like in English. This will sometimes carry over to English. "The Rooster sits on the Roof." would be perfectly OK in German. This is not a big problem, and is easy to correct when it does happen. It helps to point out that there is that difference between German and English.

After the short vowel sounds, the most common pronunciation error I have noticed is misplaced stress. Indeed, it is still a problem for me sometimes, after many years of teaching. Different languages often have different patterns of stress placement. Some examples I have noticed: "vocabulary" may come out as /VOH ke BUL ree/, "advantageous" may turn into /ad VAN te jus/, "academy" may turn into /AK e DEM ee/, etc. I'm not sure how much of this problem we can blame on the Hutterish/German influence however, since the languages are closely related. To help with this problem, I put special emphasis on proper pronunciation during conversations, reading aloud, spelling and vocabulary. We also work a lot with the phonetic respellings in the dictionary and in our science and history books.

Word order in sentences often varies between the languages. For example, "The chairs are at the table." may come out as "By the table are the chairs." – a perfect literal translation from German. "There are three horses on the hill." may come out as "Up on the hill are three horses." Many of these variations are actually OK in English, though kind of awkward, so I just ignore them. Other times I will point out the differences between the languages and how it sounds better in "proper" English. As the students become more and more fluent in English, this problem usually diminishes. The best antidote is lots of practice in English – in reading, writing, and conversation.

Similar words, used differently in the different languages, can cause confusion. The word "was" looks like the Hutterish word "was" (pronounced /vahs/). The Hutterish "was" means "know". I often hear the sentence "I was it not," meaning "I know it not," from beginners. The German word

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a | 𝔞 | i | 𝔦 | q | 𝔮 | y | 𝔶 |
| b | 𝔟 | j | 𝔧 | r | 𝔯 | z | 𝔷 |
| c | 𝔠 | k | 𝔨 | s | 𝔰 | sh | ſch |
| d | 𝔡 | l | 𝔩 | t | 𝔱 | ch | ch |
| e | 𝔢 | m | 𝔪 | u | 𝔲 | th | |
| f | 𝔣 | n | 𝔫 | v | 𝔳 | wh | |
| g | 𝔤 | o | 𝔬 | w | 𝔴 | | |
| h | 𝔥 | p | 𝔭 | x | 𝔵 | | |

**Table 1 - English & German Alphabet Comparison**

| | *English* | *German* | | *English* | *German* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a | /ă/, /ā/ | /ä/ | j | /j/ | /y/ |
| e | /ĕ/, /ē/ | /ā/, /ĕ/ | v | /v/ | /f/ |
| i | /ĭ/, /ī/ | /ē/ | w | /w/ | /v/ |
| o | /ŏ/, /ō/ | /ō/, /ŭ/ | ch | /ch/ | /k/ |
| u | /ŭ/, /ū/ | /o͞o/ | th | /th/ | --- |
| c | /k/, /s/ | /z/ | wh | /hw/ | --- |

**Table 2 – English/German Sound Differences**

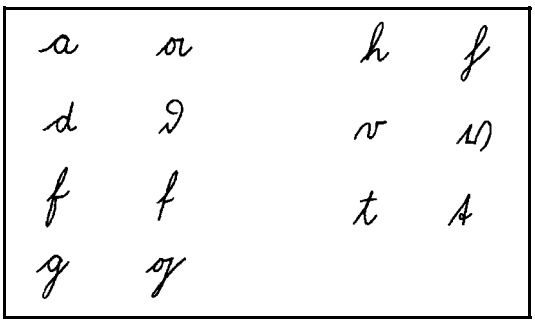


**Table 3 – Often Confused Penmanship**

## ...ELL Hutterish/German Background continued

"mich" means both "me" and "myself". "I will wash me," sounds perfectly logical to a beginner in English. As with word order, many of these errors are actually OK in English, merely awkward. Depending on the error and the level of the student, I will either ignore the errors or point out the differences between the languages. This problem also goes away as the students gain fluency in English.

Finally, idiomatic phrases can be mighty confusing. That is true for all new language learners. Idioms don't translate literally from one language to another. When you tell your beginning language learners to "cut it out", they may well reach for their scissors. The phrase "next to" is another example. For a number of years, I had noticed that most of my second grade students had trouble with a certain page of math story problems dealing with order. When the directions would tell them to circle the numbers next to eight, they would invariably circle nine and ten. When I took the time to talk with the students and study their reasoning, I finally realized that I was dealing with a language problem, not with a math problem. The Hutterish "next" is the same as the English "next". When my students saw the idiom "next to", it didn't translate and they understood it as "next" – and circled the numbers that came "next".

German idioms literally translated into English can also cause confusion. A music teacher at a colony school was teaching the students to dance – taboo in the Hutterite world. Two little boys were standing off to the side with arms folded and an expression of "I'm not gonna do this!" on their faces. When the teacher asked what the problem was, one boy responded, "That doesn't belong to us!" – a literal translation of a German idiom meaning "it is forbidden" or "it isn't right in our way of life".

Problems with idioms, like most other language problems, will lessen as the students gain fluency. In the meantime, it is important to be aware of and alert for idiomatic phrases that may cause problems. I am especially vigilant for inconspicuous ones like the aforementioned "next to". When we run into an idiom, I explain how its meaning is different from its literal translation. We also study common idioms from time to time. An interesting activity is to illustrate their literal translations. You can then share a laugh at their absurdity.

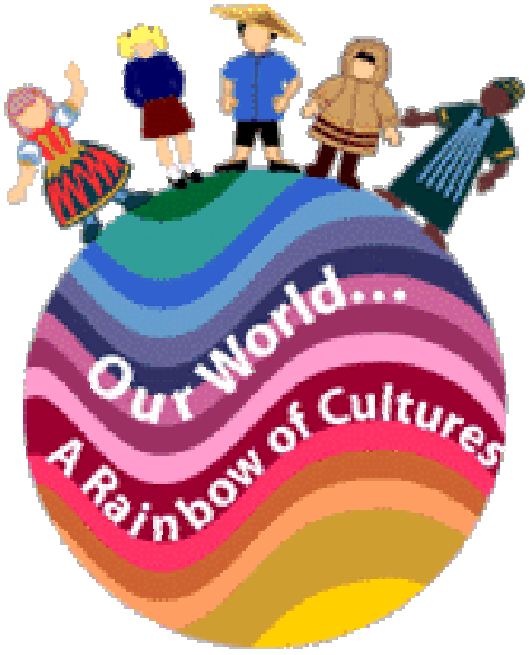
You are not fluent in a language until you learn to think in that language. When your students start learning English, they still think in their mother tongue, in Hutterish. When you speak to them in English, they listen to your English words, translate them into Hutterish to understand them, formulate an answer in Hutterish, and translate it back into English. A laborious and time-consuming process at best; lost meaning and lost learning at worst. Our goal, then, is to help our students become as fluent in English as possible as quickly as possible to maximize learning in all subjects.

The more students use a language, the more fluent they become at it. Also, if there is a real need for the language, they will be more likely to learn it and use it. Therefore, it is critical for us to provide a language-rich environment – to make sure that students get lots of practice in speaking, reading, and writing in English. That doesn't necessarily equate into extra time out of the school day for learning English. We do take extra time for language learning in kindergarten, but hardly after first grade. Once students have a basic knowledge of English – usually in first grade – I require proper English during school hours, both in the classroom and on the playground. That provides an environment for conversational English – a critical component of language learning that is often overlooked. It also gives me the opportunity to model proper English used in everyday situations and to correct errors. I have heard a few negative comments about the evils of "forcing a language" – that providing a language-rich environment without "forcing" the students to speak it also works. Quite frankly, the same argument could be made for "forcing math". Just provide a math-rich environment and hope the math will seep in. Yeah, right. I can understand where that would be OK in elective subjects – you wouldn't want to force piano practice on a student who is not interested. On survival-critical subjects like math and language, however, it is not enough. In math, our goal is to help the students learn the math concepts they will need in real life as quickly as possible. Therefore we demand tons of work and practice in math. In language learning, our goal is to help the students become as fluent as possible as quickly as possible. Therefore we need to demand as much practice as possible in speaking, reading and

writing the language.

Practice in writing is another often neglected component of language learning. That is sad, since writing is such a powerful language learning tool. Transaction with text is so much more intense in writing than it is in reading. Letter sounds, spelling patterns, sentence structure all become concrete in the students' minds so much faster as they interact with them intensely during the writing process. Focusing on putting their thoughts on paper in English enhances their ability to think in English – thereby increasing their fluency – much faster than merely learning to read. Even more, it increases their reading ability by solidifying the connection between thought and text. For students who learn the language with writing and speaking as well as with reading, reading is hardly ever the singsong "word saying without meaning" process or the text memorization process that it often is with new language learners. For them, language is about meaning – whether it be in writing, reading, or conversation. Therefore, if you truly want your students to be fluent in English, you need to provide ample practice in reading, writing, and conversation.

In conclusion, don't worry too much if your students use the German font. Put extra efforts into teaching the vowel sounds and the *th* sounds. Lots of training in lower grades on known trouble spots helps a ton. On spelling lists, have the students pronounce the words as part of the requirements. If they don't know the proper pronunciations for some words, have them look them up in the dictionary & learn the pronunciation from the dictionary respelling. Talking dictionaries on classroom computers are great. Reading stories can be recorded to the computer. Students can then easily read along as they listen to the stories with headphones – with proper pronunciation and expression. The same is true for spelling pages, etc. for beginning readers. When errors crop up, discuss the differences between the languages and teach how it would be in proper English. Provide lots of practice in speaking, reading, and writing the English language. Remember, our goal is to help the students become as fluent as possible as quickly as possible. You may need to invest a bit of time and thought initially, but the benefits will outweigh, by a long shot, the initial investment.



# Upcoming Conferences

**National Conferences**

2004 National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE) Conference
February 4-7, 2004
Albuquerque, NM
www.nabe.org

2004 TESOL Conference
March 30-April 3, 2004
Long Beach, CA
www.tesol.org

**2004 International Conference of Hutterite Educators**
August 8-10, 2004
Aberdeen, SD
Jonathan.Waldner@k12.sd.us or Nat.Hofer@k12.sd.us

## Mark Your Calendars Now!

2004 Dakota TESL Conference
June 5th & 6th
Fargo, ND
Complete Details and Registration Materials will be sent in March!

# An Overview of the TOEFL Exam
## By Dr. Dennis Sjolie

Achieving a high score on the TOEFL Exam – Test of English as a Foreign Language – is essential to hundreds of thousands of individuals around the world who wish to further their education in the United States. As a result, TOEFL is feared, dreaded, studied, and embraced world-wide. But what, really, is TOEFL? Statistics indicate that now, nearly a million people sit for this exam yearly, some of them well-prepared, others quite unsure of what they are about to encounter.

TOEFL is comprised of three "traditional" sections: Listening Comprehension, Structure and Written Expression, and Reading Comprehension. To these sections, in more recent years, the Test of Written English – TWE – has been added. In our discussion, we will examine each of these sections briefly, noting interesting points pertaining to each section.

The TOEFL Exam opens with a Listening Comprehension section comprised of three parts: dialogues, extended conversations, and mini-talks. Dialogues consist of two-line exchanges between two speakers often using informal, idiomatic-filled speech; a single question following the dialogue exchange is based upon the meaning of certain words or phrases from that dialogue. Extended conversations are essentially expanded dialogues: two speakers engage in conversations consisting of five or six line exchanges. Four or five questions based upon varying aspects of the conversation follow each extended dialogue. Mini-talks are condensed lectures, ten to twelve lines in length, often academic in nature, given by one speaker. Three or four questions based upon the lecture's content follow. In total, the Listening Section is comprised of fifty questions: thirty of which are based on dialogues; eight of which are based on extended conversations; and twelve of which are based on mini-talks. On older paper and pencil TOEFL Exams, this section is pre-recorded on tape. Of course, computer-based TOEFL Exams provide much clearer Listening sections. Test-takers must respond to each question in a limited amount of time.

The Structure and Written Expression section appears second on the TOEFL Exam and is divided into two portions: structure, which is sentence completion, and written expression, which is sentence error identification. Entirely grammatical in nature, this portion of the TOEFL includes fifteen structure questions and twenty-five error identification items for a total of forty items. Test-takers must finish this challenging portion of TOEFL in twenty-five minutes, allowing approximately thirty seconds for each item.

The third section, Reading Comprehension, typically contains five paragraph-length passages with eight to twelve questions corresponding to each passage. Test-takers must read the passages and answer the fifty corresponding questions in fifty-five minutes. The passages range in length from seven lines to a maximum of thirty-five lines and are based on science and technology, mathematics and physics, zoology, even North American history and culture.

The newest section of the TOEFL is the Test of Written English – TWE – in which test-takers must write a detailed and developed essay consisting of an introduction with thesis statement, a body, and a conclusion. Test-takers receive an essay prompt and, in thirty minutes, must write a 200- to 300-word response. However, many test-takers are not required to take the Test of Written English, which is typically offered before the other three standardized TOEFL sections.

Anyone interested in receiving further information regarding TOEFL may contact local testing centers such as Sylvan Learning Center, local colleges or universities, or contact TOEFL directly through ETS – Educational Testing Service – at http://www.toefl.org.

## North Dakota—The Land of Diversity
### By Joan Aus

When most people think of North Dakota, they think of a very sparsely populated (630,000) homogeneous population, one that consists mainly of Caucasians that trace their origins to Scandinavia, Russia and Germany. While this continues to be true in many parts of the state there has been a small explosion of cultural diversity in cities and towns all over North Dakota. According to Verlene Dvoracek, Fargo ELL Program Manager, there are currently 725 ESL/ELL students attending the public schools in Fargo and West Fargo. Many of these students are political refugees and represent a myriad of cultures, such as Bosnian, Bosnian-Roma, Cambodian, Hmong, Somolian, Sudanese, Native American and both migrant and permanent Hispanic students. Grand Forks has a smaller population of K-12 English Language Learners, but still a wide range of diversity. The largest group of ELLs are of Hispanic origin. The newest students in Grand Forks are refugees from Liberia. Other students are from Albania, Bosnia, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, Ethiopia, Iran, Taiwan, Panama, Korea, Norway and other countries across the globe.

Mari Rasmussen, the Assistant Director for Bilingual Education in the ND Department of Public Instruction, has estimated that there are approximately 150-200 Hispanic migrant students that seasonally attend public schools in the eastern and western parts of the state. Many of these Hispanic families are choosing to buy homes and live in small North Dakota towns, in spite of the fact they do not speak English. There are also five Hutterite colonies scattered throughout the southeastern part of the state that have a combined population of almost 600 that offer a very unique cultural perspective to small rural towns such as La-Moure, Ellendale and Milnor. There is also a Hutterite colony northwest of Grand Forks.

Lastly, North Dakota ranks 18th in the U.S as far as Native American populations are concerned (1990 Census). In 1990 it was estimated that 25,917 Native Americans of various tribes such as Arikara, Hidatsa, Mandan, Dakota, Lakota, Yanktonai and the Turtle Band of the Chippewa live in North Dakota. Some conservative estimates from the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction indicate that 2-5% of the children from these communities are Limited English Proficient and need additional language skills to succeed in English-only classrooms.

In an effort to meet the needs of its changing student population the Department of Public Instruction of North Dakota issued a directive in September 2000 that required any school that has an ESL/ELL population to have a certified ESL/ELL teacher or qualified paraprofessional in place to provide instruction for those children. Now with the inception of the No Children Left Behind Act the federal government has mandated that these children's academic needs be met and that their academic achievement be commensurate with mainstream native English speaking children. North Dakota teachers of English speakers of other languages have responded positively to both the state and federal mandates and have collectively proceeded to earn their English as Second Language endorsement at both the graduate and undergraduate level to meet the needs of their changing student population.

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## Rural ELL Consortiums
## By Jamie Moen

I live in a rural area where there are low numbers of English Language Learners or the population consists of migrant students who are only in enrolled in school from August—October and then again in April and May. When our school was interested in applying for a Title III grant, we found that we would need to have a minimum of 50 students in order to qualify. What's a school to do? Starting a consortium was our only option if we wanted to receive additional funding for an English Language Learner program. The superintendent in Larimore contacted other area schools to determine their numbers of ELLs. He came up with a list of seven schools who either had low numbers, or at some point in time had low numbers of ELLs. Together, these seven schools make up the Larimore Area consortium. The schools included are: Larimore, Midway, Manvel, Emerado, Northwood, Thompson, and Hatton. To date, only two of the schools currently have ELLs but the other schools know that the services are available to them if the need arises.

In order to apply for the grant, the consortium needed to have a program plan. I wrote the program plan before any program had been implemented, so this year after things got started, the plan needed and still needs some adjusting.

I am employed part-time as the certified ESL teacher to oversee the program. I am at Larimore Elementary school three days per week and Midway Public School two days per week. Midway has approximately 65 students that are migrant students, however this year a couple students have chosen to stay year-round. Larimore has six ELL students. This year we also had four migrant students. Last year we had twelve migrant students, so this number varies from year-to-year.

In addition to providing English Language instruction to the students, I am also responsible for assessing the students, planning staff development on ELL issues, and completing any necessary paperwork.

In rural areas, the consortium is going to be the best and sometimes the only option for schools who need to provide services for English Language Learners.

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